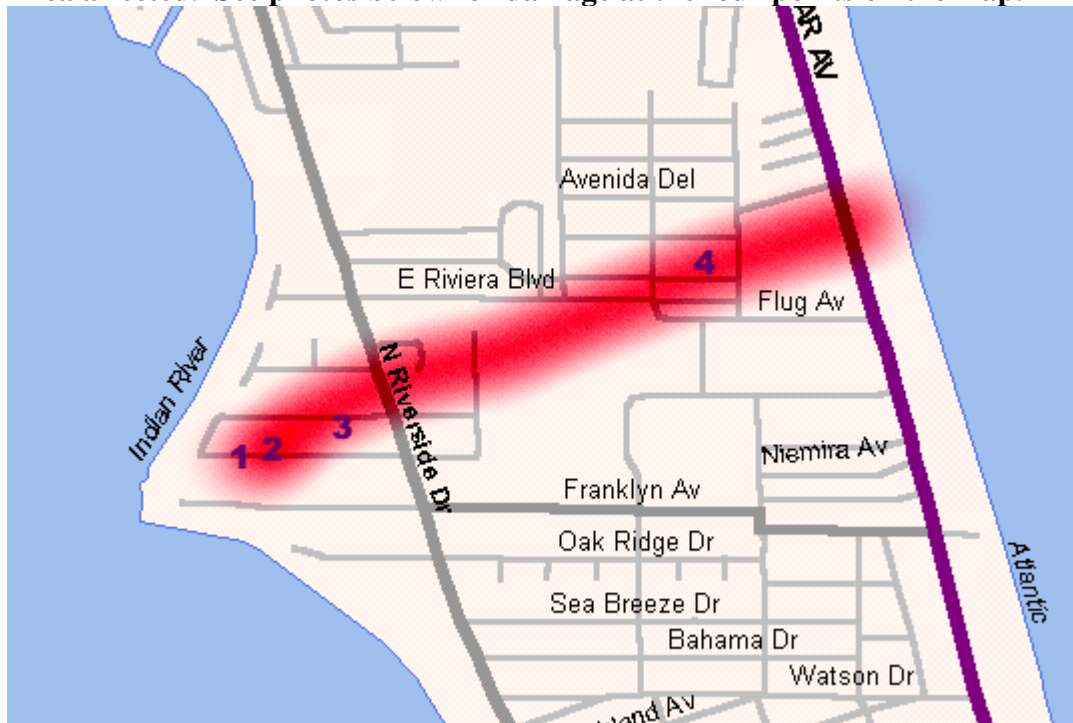


The Indialantic Tornado - 2/17/98

Overview of Indialantic Tornado - the tornado first touched down around 7:07 AM on February 17th, 1998 in the 500 block of South River Oaks Drive on the barrier island near Indialantic. The tornado knocked down some fencing in the backyard and tore the porch roof off of one house and damaged portions of the main roof. A car in the driveway was spun around and damaged by flying debris ([photo 2](#)). The neighboring house was damaged by flying debris from the first house, including a roof beam that completely penetrated the wall of the house ([photo 1](#)). The tornado was rated F1 (73-112 mph at this point FUJITA DAMAGE SCALE). The tornado immediately lifted to near treetop level and continued to do minor (F0 damage - winds less than 73mph) further along South River Oaks Drive and North River Oaks Drive. Trees were topped off and one concrete light pole was broken off ([Photo 3](#)) near the top indicating winds speeds were much higher than F0 just 20 or 30 feet off the ground. The tornado then lifted for about 1/4 mile and touched down again just north of the Hoover Junior High School on Riviera Blvd and produced damage consistent with an F1 tornado to several houses. One house had its roof mostly removed on Avenida Central ([Photo 4](#)) and several other houses had structural damage. The tornado again lifted striking the roof of the Winn Dixie on A1A and damaging a gas station and a beach house east of A1A before moving out to sea. Total path length was approximately 1 mile.

Note: another tornado moved near this same path late in the afternoon on 2/22/98, causing similar damage. Here is a picture ([Photo 5](#)) of it as a tornadic waterspout just offshore (near the old Winn Dixie on A1A).

Area affected. See photos below for damage at the four points on the map.



Damage photo at location 1.



Damage photo at location 2.



Damage photo at location 3.

A cement power-pole snapped and hanging by its embedded reinforcing bar.



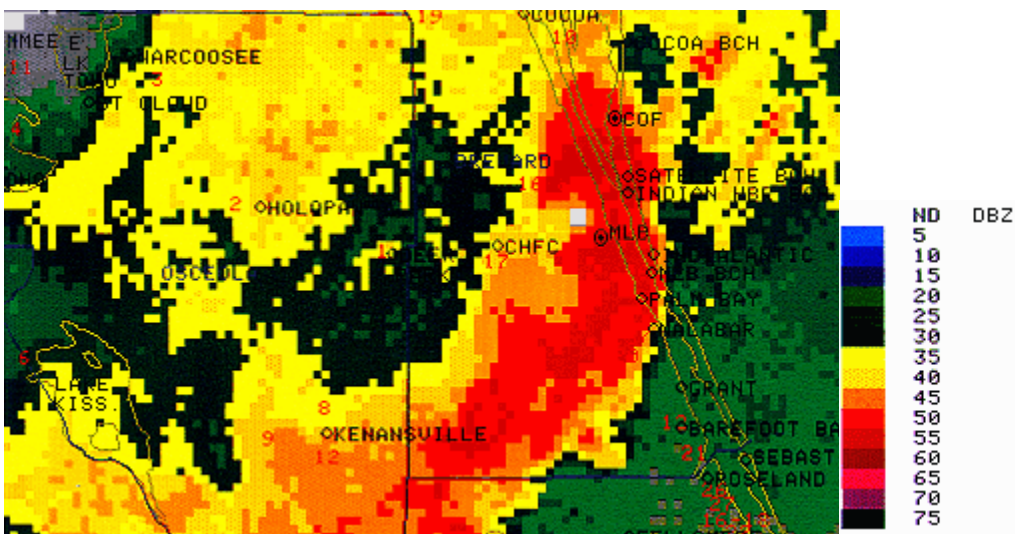
Damage photo at location 4.



Photo 5. Tornado that moved offshore on 2/22/98 near the same path of the 2/17/98 tornado!

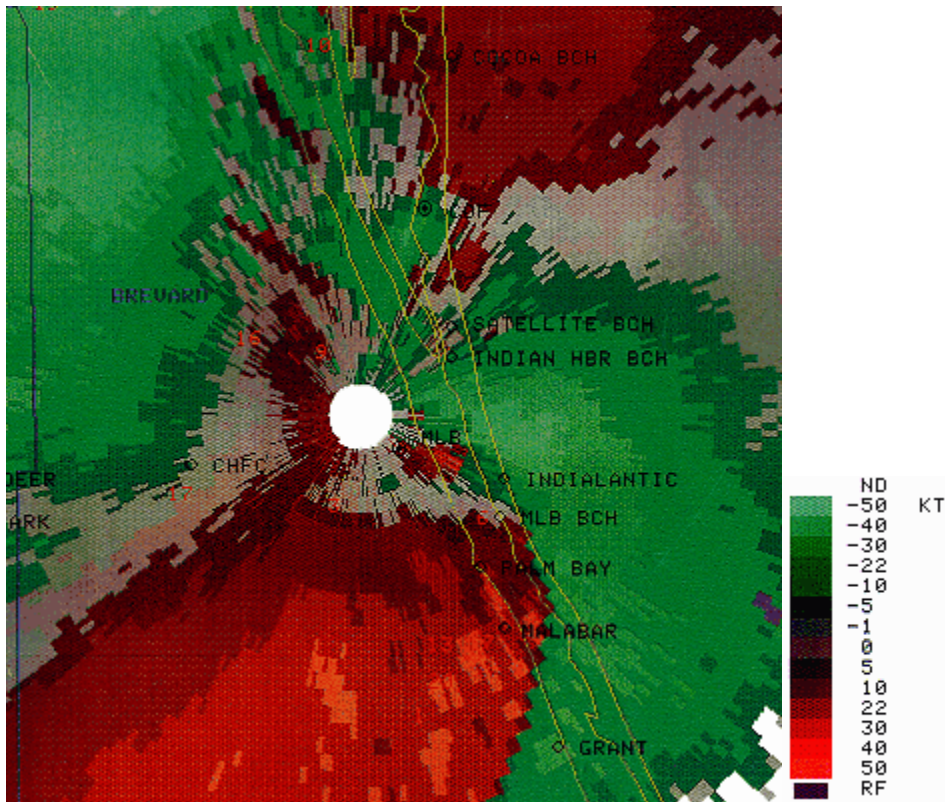


METEOROLOGICAL OBSERVATIONS WSR-88D Doppler Radar



Composite Reflectivity 7:09 AM EST 2/17/98

This radar reflectivity image from the NWS Melbourne WSR-88D shows an intense "Bow Echo" approaching Indian Land and the barrier islands. Typically, this type of feature is associated with damaging straight line winds, however short-lived tornadoes can spin up rapidly along the leading edge of the bow echo.



Velocity 7:09 AM EST 2/17/98

This Doppler velocity image from the NWS Melbourne WSR-88D shows the small circulation associated with the Indialantic tornado between the Melbourne radar site (the white circle in the middle of the image) and the town of Indialantic. The circulation is located near the letters "MLB" on the image. Green indicates air moving toward the radar site and red indicates winds moving away from the radar and reveals the classic counterclockwise circulation around the great majority of tornadoes.